

**Press Release, March 12, 2003**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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The Brown County Planning Commission has requested Department of Natural Resources approval of an update and expansion to various Urban Service Areas within the Brown County Planning area. A sewer service area plan delineates areas requested for sewer development and "environmentally sensitive areas", which are considered unsuitable for development based on the potential for adverse water quality impacts. The Department has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate the effects of the amendment proposal.

The proposed amendment adds over 18,121 acres of land to the existing service areas to be used for mixed density residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and open space uses; 7,769 of these acres are developable. The acreage requested is based on a growth scenario developed by the Brown County Planning Department for the Year 2020. The county's population in 2000 was estimated to be approximately 224,171 persons. This expanded service area is designed to serve a population of approximately 242,827 persons (267,105 (2020 population)\* .909 (ratio that is sewerable)) by the Year 2020 at an overall *average* density of 2.5 housing units per acre according to Lisa Helmuth of the DNR Watershed Management Bureau.

The areas to be developed involve land adjacent to environmentally sensitive resources throughout the county; however Brown County has identified and is protecting buffers adjacent to wetlands and streams and continues to promote stormwater and erosion control management during and subsequent to development. These provisions, if implemented, will help protect surface and groundwater quality. If not, the amendment may result in adverse effects on the water quality of the region as well as downstream resources.

In addition, innovation to enhance onsite stormwater management and groundwater infiltration, which is critical for protecting stream and wetland water quality and ground water supplies, should be promoted. Development of street and neighborhood designs and best management practices that maximize stormwater infiltration, will reduce potential impacts to water resources, particularly the area's many springs and wetlands.

The environmental assessment can be obtained from Lisa Helmuth (WT/2), Bureau of Watershed Management, Wisconsin DNR, P.O. Box 7921, Madison WI 53707, (608) 266-7768, lisa.helmuth@dnr.state.wi.us. Public comments are welcome and may be submitted to Lisa Helmuth by 4:30 p.m. March 25, 2003.